

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF BUSINESS & MANAGEMENT

The Impact of Organisation Development Interventions on Organisational Performance: A Case Study of Givers Foundation in the Tamale Metropolis, Ghana

Imoro Bashiru

Assistant Industrial Liaison Officer, Department of Industrial Liaison Office,
Tamale Technical University, Ghana

Katere Enock

Project Coordinator, Department of Projects, PREC Ghana Foundation, Ghana

Abstract:

Organisations operate amidst multiple challenges and threats. Literature abound that such challenges has in the past led to the folding up of many organisations. This has resulted in tremendous pressure on organizations to generate equally fast responses in order to survive and sustain. This study was structured to apply organization development framework and tools to assess the capacity of Givers Foundation to identify its areas of weakness and strengths and develop interventions to ameliorate identified gaps. The overall aim has been to ascertain whether OD intervention has a significant impact on organization performance. The result revealed that organizational variables such as purpose, structure and communication, appreciative leadership, reward systems, knowledge management, coaching and mentorship, change and growth and relationship are strongly correlated with organizational performance. It recommends that managers of organisations should design policies that guides the regular assessment of organizational capacities periodically.

Keywords: Organization development intervention, capacity assessment, performance, effectiveness

1. Background

A rapidly changing business environment characterized by deregulation of markets, increased competition and changing customer and investor demands has become a real challenge for most organisations the world over. Individuals within organisations are also faced with multiple challenges, such as finding satisfaction in and through work, and dealing with the obsolescence of their knowledge and skills. These challenges have in the past, led to the folding up of many organisations (Brown and Katz, 2011). In view of the above, there is tremendous pressure on organizations to generate equally fast responses in order to survive and sustain themselves. Organisation development is presumed as the antidote to correct deficiencies and inconsistencies, inherent in the development processes of small as well as large scale organisations. French and Bell (2000) defines organization development as the process of planned change in organizations in which the vital elements relate to (1) The nature of activities to be executed (2) The direction of the change activities (3) The key target of the change activities and (4) The desired results of the change activities. The overall aim has been to promote organizational health and effectiveness by changing the attitude, beliefs, values and structure of organization.

In the last decade, organisations across sectors have tried their level best to think and act with transformation and performance improvement mindset. Organisations in the NGO sector are no exception to this change process. It is believed that an organization development intervention will remove the hurdles and resolves the difficulties towards the effectiveness of organisations. This is normally done by way of assessing the existing status of the internal and external components of an organization, identifying areas of weaknesses and implementing appropriate interventions that will serve the organization into the future. With this background, the paper presents an organization development assessment and intervention with reference to Givers Foundation.

Specifically, the study seeks to:

- Determine the existing status (pre-organization capacity assessment) of the Givers Foundation,
- Identify organizational capacity gaps
- Design and implement appropriate organization development interventions, and
- document transformation indicators that have resulted from the implementation of the organization development intervention.

The overall objective is to ascertain whether organization development intervention has an effect on the organizations' performance and effectiveness. The paper is divided into five sections. Aside this introduction, the second section entails review of related literature and a conceptual framework that guides the study, the third section shows profiles of pre-organisation capacity assessment of the Givers Foundation. The fourth and fifth sections shows the

implemented interventions and document transformation indicators that have resulted from the implementation of the organisation development intervention respectively.

1.1. The Concept of Organisation Capacity Assessment

Grantmakers for Effective Organizations (2003) defines organizational capacity as 'the ability of an organization to achieve its mission through a combination of sound management, strong leadership and an ongoing commitment to evaluate and achieve results'. Most especially in the public sector, a widely accepted and used definition of organizational capacity is 'the ability of a government to organize, develop, direct and control its human, financial, information and physical resources' (Abnory, 2001). In the non-profit sector, capacity is often defined as 'the set of processes, management practices or attributes that help an organization achieve its mission and vision' (Hale and Fields, 2007). The scope of 'organizational capacity' is not entirely clear, as the concept has been described not only as an input, but also as an output, a process and a resource (Jung, 2001). Most researchers agree that organizational capacity is a multidimensional concept that encompasses more than an organization's financial resources and thus context-dependent.

The concept of organizational capacity has a number of common elements. For example, a strong organizational infrastructure, strong external stakeholder networks and the availability of resources are identified as important determinants of organizational capacity in a number of conceptualizations (Puplampu, 2010; Abnory, 2001). Grantmakers for Effective Organisations (2003) identifies leadership, purpose (vision, mission and strategy), diversity, equity and inclusion, programme implementation, fund development, financial management, communication, technology, collaboration, evaluation and learning as key variables to be assessed in determining an organization's capacity. Similarly, Leczy et al. (2011) conclude that the theories and frameworks relating to the key elements of a strong organization are management effectiveness, programme effectiveness, network effectiveness and legitimacy. Human resource is also highlighted as an important factor, as a skilled workforce is considered essential to an organization's functions and mission. However, the relative importance of these different elements may depend on an organization's level of maturity, as well as its mission, priorities, portfolio and stakeholder community. For example, an organization may want to respond to accountability pressures and restore its performance and reputation, or it may need to support a reform or modernization process. An organization's leaders may also question whether the organization can innovate, or customers may demand certain services from an organization. There may be a number of contextual factors and organizational priorities at play that can affect how organisations view their capabilities.

Marvin Weisbord's six-box model of organization capacity assessment is comparable to those of other organizational capacity diagnostic frameworks, such as those proposed by Burke and Litwin (1992) and Nadler and Tushman (1977). Weisbord (1976) proposed a model of organizational diagnosis that sets various organizational activities, formal or informal, into six categories: purpose, structure, reward systems, leadership, relationships, and useful mechanisms (Lok and Crawford, 2000). The study adopts Weisbord's six-box model because it is comparatively simple compared to others, can be easily understood by organizational clients and allows visualization of organizational development and growth, reflects an organization's core activities and key variables, and has been successfully applied to assist clients in their change programmes (Puplampu, 2010; Abnory, 2001). For the purpose of this study, the elements of Weisbord's six-box model have further been categorized into nine namely: purpose (vision, mission and objectives), structure and communication, appreciative leadership, reward systems, knowledge management, coaching and mentorship, change and growth and relationship.

1.1.1. Organisational Development Interventions

According to Sessa and London (2015), there are three types of organizational development interventions: individual, collective and organizational. The author adds that an organization must be able to identify the type of intervention needed and start planning its implementation. In contrast, according to Hammer (2015), companies can only plan activities to eradicate a problem after having identified the appropriate interventions. Individual and group interventions involve an individual and a group, respectively. Whereas organizational intervention is based on strategy and policy. Waddell, et al (2019) states that the intervention process involves five stages such as entry and recruitment, diagnosis, intervention design, change management and leadership, and finally evaluation and institutionalization of interventions.

In the first stage, an organization takes into account that an OD intervention is needed to address a specific problem. Secondly, an organization initiates a specific intervention after establishing the root causes of the problem. In the third step, the organization designs the approach to address the problem and add value to growth. The management of the organization implements the designed intervention to manage the change and achieve success. In the last step, managers and executives evaluate the course of action to see if the process is going well or if it needs to be redesigned.

The intervention process can be divided into four categories, such as human process, strategic, human resource management and techno structural. According to Rothwell et al. (2015), job analysis, career development, reward and recognition and appraisal policies, and team building activities fall under the human process intervention.

1.1.2. Organizational Performance

Organisational performance is an appropriate dependent variable for any management research. Performance is a good measure of business survival and success. All business operations, whether marketing, human resources or strategy, aim to promote positive performance. Performance measurement is used to assess the specific actions taken by companies, their current position relative to their competitors and their performance over time. Brown (2011) argues that performance measurement involves comparing planned results with actual results, investigating deviations from original

plans, assessing individual performance and reviewing progress towards set targets. The evaluation of interventions is important for the well-being of organisations and follows three rudimentary steps: sounding out the main bases for organizational interventions, judging planned versus actual results and taking corrective action to ensure performance is in line with planned activities. There are various performance indicators: competitiveness (market share and clientele), flexibility (flexibility of volumes and specifications), financial performance (profitability and liquidity), resource use (productivity and efficiency), service quality (responsiveness and appearance) and innovation (innovation process and individual innovation) (Abnory, 2001; Faki, 2013; Jeerapaet, 2010). These six core performance variables reflect the success of the chosen strategy (competitive advantage and financial performance) or establish competitive gain (resource use, service quality, flexibility and innovation). In this study, productivity, achievement of objectives and innovation capacity were used as performance indicators.

1.3. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is as follows:

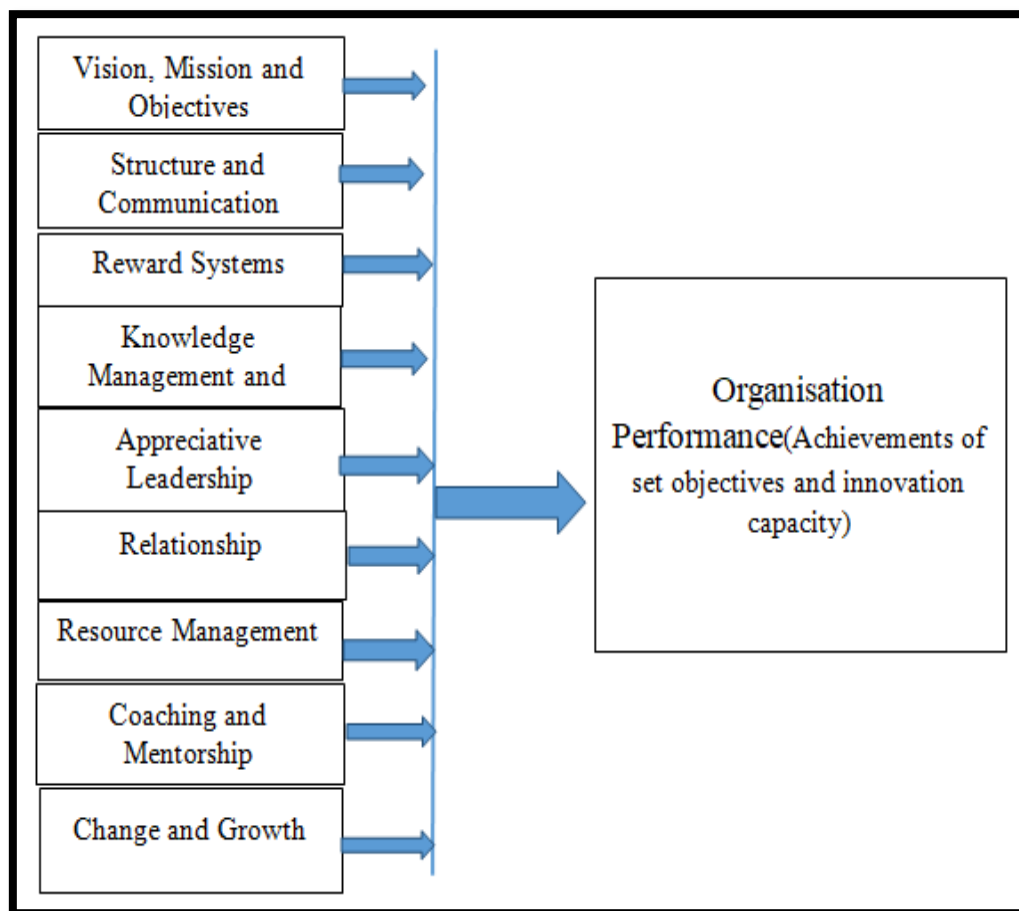


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Authors Construct, 2020

1.4. General Methodological Approach

1.4.1. Action Research Design

The study employed and used the action research design. The design was in three phases. It was structured to compare the pre organization development intervention and post organization development intervention data on the variables to ascertain whether there was a difference after intervention. The action research approach was appropriate for this study since it allowed the creation of knowledge during the interventional process, which could lead to the desired outcome of the study. The three phases were pre-organizational development intervention, the organization development intervention, and post-organizational development intervention.

1.4.2. Pre Organization Development Intervention (ODI)

There were two primary purposes of this stage. First, it was to assess and analyze the existing status of the Givers Foundation purposely to address concerns in relation to nine variables. The nine variables are purpose (vision, mission and objectives, structure and communication, appreciative leadership, relationship, reward systems, coaching and mentorship, resource management, change and growth and knowledge management and learning. Second, it was to set and create intervention activities in order to implement them through organization development intervention process. The researchers collected all the information about the current operations and opinions of the employees of Givers

Foundation. The data received were analysed to determine the potential change to improve the organization. In addition, this stage also identified the weakness and threats, and to find an appropriate organization development for these weaknesses and threats to improve the organisations performance.

1.4.3. Organization Development Intervention (ODI)

This stage was to plan an action in order to improve Givers Foundations concerns addressed from the pre-organization development intervention state. The actions taken were designed after data gathering at the pre-organization development intervention. Each set of objectives and activities were formulated and carried out in response to issues. Specifically, the plan of action entails, the individual thematic areas, the issues identified, intervention, the expected outputs, time-frame and the responsible person(s). The length to execute interventions took twelve months.

1.4.4. Post Organization Development Intervention (ODI)

The same qualitative and quantitative approaches at pre-ODI were used purposely to assess the organizations' current situation in relation to the nine variables. The overall objective was to identify whether there has been a transformation after the OD intervention.

1.4.5. Population and Sample

The selected participants consisted of a mix of both the top and lower level staffs. All participants were at work and on deck remaining in their current position for more than 6 months. For the purpose of this work, the entire staffs of Givers Foundation were used. In all, 15 staffs were used as respondents of the study.

1.4.6. Instruments

The researcher used both qualitative and quantitative research methods to collect and analysis data in both pre and post- OD intervention stages of this study. The qualitative method that applied for data collection is the group interview and observation. The quantitative technique applied by using the Liker-Scale (5 = Strongly Agree, 4 is Agree, 3 is Uncertain, 2 is Disagree, and 1 is Strongly Disagree.) and open-ended question. Data was analyze and presented using tables, graphs.

1.5. Presentation of Findings

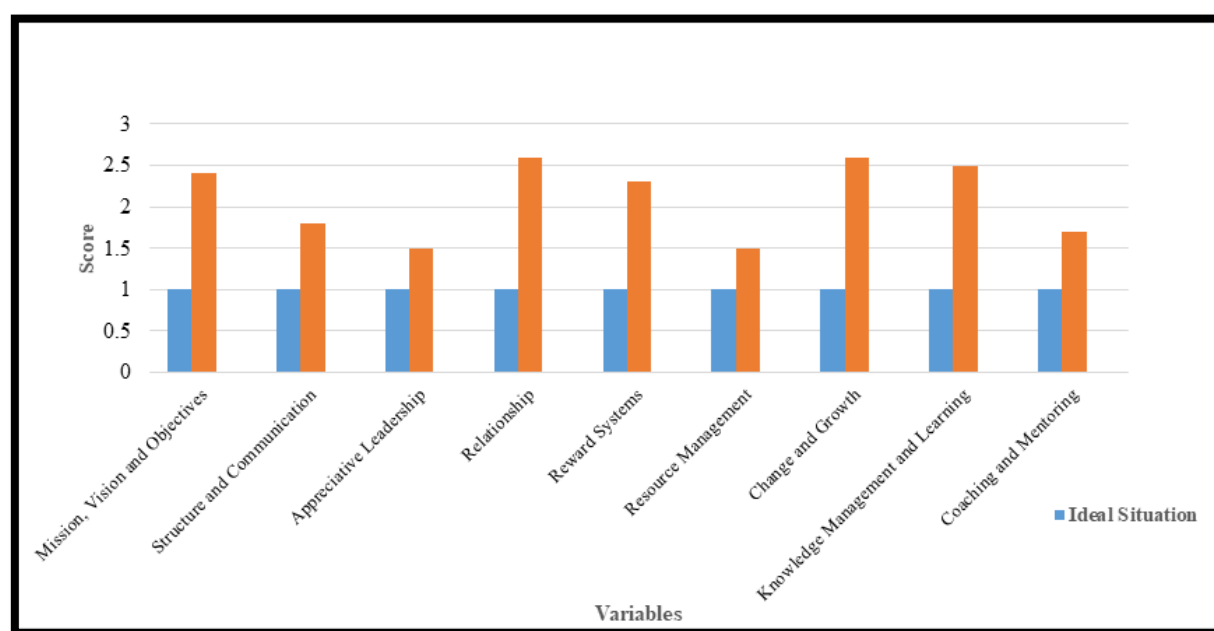


Figure 2: Pre Intervention Score of Organisation Capacity Assessment of Givers Foundation

1.5.1. Vision, Mission and Objective Component

The results from Table 1 indicate a deficiency in the vision, mission and objectives of the organization. 35% of the staffs did not know the mission, vision and objectives of the organization, and could not recite its purpose statement. Only 40% of the staffs had adequate knowledge and understanding of the mission, vision and objectives of the organization. It was also obvious that the stakeholders of the organization will have very little or no knowledge about the vision, mission and objectives of the organization.

1.5.2. Structure and Communication

It is apparent from Table 1 that the organization has challenges that are related to its structure and communication. The diagnosis responses indicated that the organization has challenges that revolves around poor internal checks and controls, weak operational administrative policies, weak adherence to reporting and supervision channels and weak filing and update systems. These institutional deficiencies makes it difficult for the employees to appropriately express their ideas, share their combined experiences, which further affects innovative solutions.

1.5.3. Appreciative Leadership

The result of the organization capacity assessment demonstrates a good performance in terms of appreciative leadership. The respondents note that the leaders ask the right questions, and runs a participatory style of leadership. They further note that the leaders uses words and engages in actions that inspire those they lead. The respondents were quick to add that the absence of a policy document for the determination of leaders affects succession planning in the organization.

1.5.4. Reward Systems

The organization obtain a score of 2.3 in reward systems. The respondents note that the there are no systems that advances extra monetary and other benefits to employees who perform to, or above expectations. It was collaboratively agreed that, institutional reward policy document would correct the inherent deficiencies in the existing reward systems.

1.5.5. Resource Management

The organization obtain a score of 1.5. The score is an indication that the organization is doing well in this thematic area of resource management. The respondents however mentioned that an improvement in the process of pre-planning, scheduling and allocating the organizational resources for maximum efficiency would be significant in helping the organization to build a solid resource base. This will further help to promote effective resource management, build transparency, avoid unforeseen hiccups, measure efficiency and provide a useful safety net.

1.5.6. Coaching and Mentorship

The Givers Foundation obtained a score of 1.7 in coaching and mentorship. The respondent's note that, the organization do not have a coaching and mentorship policy document. They thus do not perform coaching and mentoring activities, and so no steps are taken to assess leaders on coaching and mentorship plans.

1.5.7. Knowledge Management and Learning

The organization obtained a score of 2.5. Knowledge management and learning is weak in the Givers Foundation. The staffs and researchers collaboratively identified cross-training programs, documentation management systems, content management systems (CSMs), and social networking tools as significant in the promotion of knowledge management and learning.

1.5.8. Change and Growth

The organization obtained a score of 2.6 in this thematic area. The capacity assessment process revealed that, the organization makes very little efforts to look for new changes that would lead to organizational productivity and growth. The organization also lacks change and transition management policy. Collaboratively, it was agreed that, organizational retreats and seminars, research and publications should be encouraged in the organization. These among others have the hidden potentials, and provides alternative measures to address key organizational challenges.

1.5.9. Relationship

The organization obtained a score of 2.6 for relationship. The organizational diagnosis process unveiled that the staffs have no adequate knowledge of the board of directors, their expertise and the individual role they play in the organization. Aside the above, the organization falls on existing social structures and organizational leaders to resolve intense disagreements between and among the employees. That is to say, the organization does not have a documented conflict resolution policy. Whiles favorable conditions are often created for newly recruited individuals, there has not been frequent orientations and retreats programmes that are targeted to assist employees to examine their capacities, learn and share knowledge and re-strategize for efficiency and effectiveness.

Thematic Area	Issue Identified	Activity / Key Task	Timeframe	Expected Output	Responsible Person
Vision, Mission and Objectives	Staffs and other key stakeholders do not understand vision, mission and objectives	Paste vision, mission and objectives statements at the entrance, reception and the director's office	September, 2019	Staffs and key stakeholders understand vision, mission and objective of the organization	Change Agent Project Coordinator
		Organize vision, mission and objective recital competition for staffs	September, 2019	Staffs and stakeholders are able to recite mission vision and objectives	Change Agent Project Coordinator
Structure and Communication	Staffs do not have adequate knowledge of board of directors	Organize key organizational stakeholder retreat session	November, 2019	Increased knowledge about key stakeholders, and their role in the organization	Project Director
	Weak operational administrative policies, systems and procedures	Review and strengthen operational administrative policies, systems and procedures	February, 2020	Operational administrative policies, systems and procedures developed	Project Director Change Agent
Appreciative Leadership	Absence of a leadership development policy document	Develop a coherent leadership policy document	January, 2019	Laid down leadership procedure which is well known to key stakeholders	Project Director Project Coordinator Change Agent
Relationship	No institutional retreats	Organisational Retreat Schedule (ORT) organized	Feb, 2021	Available timetable that shows dates of organizational retreats	Project Coordinator
	Weak capacity building of team on job roles	Organize training on job roles for staffs	December, 2019	Increase knowledge of the dynamics of roles	Project Director
	Absence of conflict resolution policy	Develop conflict resolution policy	January, 2021	Reduce incidence of unhealthy conflicts in the organization	Project Director Board of Governors
	Weak trust among staffs	Familiarization Identity Display Training	November, 2019	Increased knowledge or self and significant others	Project Coordinator
Reward systems	Absence of reward policy document	Develop reward policy document	January, 2020	Increased knowledge on reward policies	Project Coordinator, Board of Governors
Resource Management	Inappropriate scheduling and resource allocation	Training on appropriate planning and resource management systems	February, 2020	Coherent scheduling and resource management systems	Project Coordinator
	Weak resource mobilization	Training of Resource Mobilization Officers	February, 2020	Increased available resources for projects	Project Director, Board of Governors

Table 1: Action/Intervention Planning and Implementation

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Thematic Area	Ideal Condition	Pre-Intervention Score	Post-Intervention Score	Transformation	Interpretation
Vision, Mission and Objectives	1	2.4	1.4	1.0	Very good
Structure and Communication	1	1.8	1.6	0.2	Very good
Appreciative Leadership	1	1.5	1.5	0.0	Very good
Relationship	1	2.6	1.2	1.4	Excellent
Reward systems	1	2.3	1.3	1.0	Excellent
Resource Management	1	1.5	1.2	0.3	Excellent
Change and Growth	1	2.6	1.5	1.1	Excellent
Knowledge Management and Learning	1	2.5	1.8	0.7	Very good
Coaching and Mentorship	1	1.7	1.9	-0.2	Needs Improvement
Total		18.9	13.4	5.5	
		Mean = 2.1	Mean = 1.49	0.61	Significant

Table 2: Organisation Capacity Assessment Transformation

Source: Field Survey, 2021

1.6. Interpretation

The study revealed a significant transformation after the intervention. Aside coaching and mentoring that recorded a negative transformation, all the other variables has projected towards the ideal score of one (1). In mean terms, Table 2 shows that the transformation score (0.61) is less than the mean score of the pre-intervention assessment. It is also apparent that the post intervention score (1.49) is closer to the ideal score of one (1), than the pre-assessment mean score (2.1) is. The computational scores show that the organizational development interventions have had a positive impact in drawing the mean value to the ideal situation.

1.7. Conclusion

Organisation development interventions are effective in identifying the problems in organisations, finding and designing the solutions, implementing and evaluating them. Change cycles will provide effective solutions to tougher problems and resolves the strange problems also. OD practitioners have provided different types of interventions to deal with different types of problems in organizations'. Aside the provision of solution to the organization's problems, these interventions enhance interpersonal communication and resolves conflicts. This paper has done a survey and by analyzing the results of the findings, proves that there exists a positive relationship between organization development interventions and performance improvements.

2. References

- i. Abnory (2001). Human Relations in Ghanaian Organisations. Hampton Press: Cape Coast, Ghana
- ii. Brown, D. R. (2011). *An experiential approach to organizational development* (8th Edition ed.). New Jersey: Pearson as Prentice Hall.
- iii. Brown, T., & Katz, B. (2011). Change by design. *Journal of product innovation management*, 28(3), 381-383.
- iv. Burke, W. W., & Litwin, G. H. (1992). A causal model of organizational performance and change. *Journal of management*, 18(3), 523-545.
- v. Fakii, I. Z. (2013). *The influence of strategy on organizational performance of state corporations in Kenya* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi).
- vi. French, W., & Bell, C., Jr. (2000). *Organization Development: Behavioral Science Interventions for Organization Improvement* (4th Edition). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- vii. Grantmakers for Effective Organizations. (2003). Grantmakers for Effective Organizations theory of change. Retrieved December 1, 2020, from http://www.geofunders.org/_uploads/documents/live/GEO%20Theory%20of%20Change_short%20final.pdf
- viii. Hale, J. and Fields, D. (2007). 'Exploring Servant Leadership Across Cultures: A Study of Followers in Ghana and the USA'. *Leadership*, Vol. 3, No.4, pp.397-417
- ix. Hammer, M. (2015). What is business process management? In *Handbook on business process management 1* (pp. 3-16). Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg.
- x. Jeerapaet, P. (2010). The impact of OD interventions on performance management: A Case study. *AU-GSB e-JOURNAL*, 3(2).
- xi. Jung, D. I. (2001). 'Transformational and Transactional Leadership and their Effects on Creativity in Groups'. *Creativity Res. J.* 13: 185-195.
- xii. Leczy, J., Schmitz, H., & Swedlund, H. (2011). Defining NGO effectiveness: Mobilizing scholarship for practice. *Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University*.

- xiii. Lok, P., & Crawford, J. (2000). The application of a diagnostic model and surveys in organizational development. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*.
- xiv. Nadler, D., & Tushman, M. L. (1977). A diagnostic model for organizational behavior. *Perspectives on behavior in organizations*, 85-98.
- xv. Puplampu, B. B. (2010). 'Leadership as Engagement, Leadership as System Development: A Contextualised Ghanaian Study'. *European Business Review*, Vol. 22, No. 6, pp. 624-651
- xvi. Rothwell, W. J., Jackson, R. D., Ressler, C. L., Jones, M. C., & Brower, M. (2015). *Career planning and succession management: Developing your organization's talent—for today and tomorrow: Developing your organization's talent—for today and tomorrow*. ABC-CLIO.
- xvii. Sessa, V. I., & London, M. (2015). *Continuous learning in organizations: Individual, group, and organizational perspectives*. Psychology Press.
- xviii. Waddell, D., Creed, A., Cummings, T. G., & Worley, C. G. (2019). *Organisational change: Development and transformation*. Cengage AU.
- xix. Weisbord, M. R. (1976). Organizational diagnosis: Six places to look for trouble with or without a theory. *Group & Organization Studies*, 1(4), 430-447.